A

SERMON,

PREACHED *JANUARY* 9, 1805.

IN

THE TABERNACLE,

SALEM,

AT THE ORDINATION OF

The Rev. LUCIUS BOLLES

TO THE

PASTORAL CARE

OF THE

Baptiſt Church and Society in that Town.

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Ordination Sermon.

PROVERBS xi. 30.

THE FRUIT OF THE RIGHTEOUS IS A TREE OF LIFE; AND HE THAT WINNETH SOULS IS WISE.

BY the *righteous* we mean the real believer, who is *made righteous by the obedience of One*;* and who, having been renewed in the ſpirit of his mind, acts agreeably to the ſtricteſt rules of uprightneſs, under the influence of evangelic principles.

By his *fruit* we underſtand his Chriſtian tempers, his holy life, and his godly converſation. On theſe accounts he is a *tree of life;* deep rooted and laden with thoſe fruits which are to the praiſe and glory of God. He hath his fruit unto holineſs, and the end will be everlaſting life: Whom David beautifully deſcribes, Pſalm i. 2. *And he ſhall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his ſeaſon; his leaf alſo ſhall not wither; and whatſoever he doeth ſhall proſper.*

The text is deſcriptive of all good men, but eſpecially of the faithful miniſters of the goſpel, who are ſaid to watch for ſouls as they who muſt give an account.

* Rom. v. 19.

Let us,

I. Conſider the nature and great importance of the object of their miniſtry, with the means beſt calculated to accompliſh it.

II. Shew in what reſpects he who winneth ſouls is wiſe.

I. Conſider the nature and great importance of the object of the goſpel miniſtry, to *win ſouls*, with the means beſt calculated to accompliſh it.

Solomon uſes the term *ſouls* to ſignify the whole perſon. In this ſenſe it is uſed in the ſacred ſcriptures, and in common converſation. In Acts xxvii. 37. Paul ſays, *We were all in the ſhip two hundred threeſcore and ſixteen ſouls.* We ſay in common, when we deſcribe a ſhipwreck, in which all the people were loſt, "every *ſoul* periſhed."

He might alſo intend to convey to us the idea, that the ſoul is the man; or his moſt important part. The body is mere matter, myſteriouſly united to the mind, and under its direction and influence. Hence it is, that by an act of the will, we can extend an arm, and bring it again to the body. We can walk, run, and perform the various functions of animal nature, unleſs prevented by ſome natural cauſe. And, as it has no conſciouſneſs, it cannot be accountable. It follows, that the ſoul is the man, or his moſt important part. And being a conſcious, intelligent agent, will ultimately be called to give an account of every thing done in the body.

"How complicate, how wonderful is man?
How paſſing wonder HE, who made him ſo?
Who center'd in our make ſuch ſtrange extremes?"*

* YOUNG.

There are two ſources, whence we may derive the moſt correct ideas of the human ſoul; the ſacred ſcriptures, and our own conſciouſneſs of what paſſes within us. Moſes informs us, *That the Lord God formed man of the duſt of the ground, and breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life; and man became a living ſoul.** Here we are taught that the ſoul was immediately inſpired by God, and is quite different in its nature or ſubſtance from the body: the one is *matter*, the other is *ſpirit*.

Solomon uſes an expreſſion of like import with that of Moſes: *Then ſhall the duſt return to the earth as it was; and the ſpirit ſhall return unto God who gave it.*†

Our bleſſed Lord maintains the ſame diſtinction between the ſoul and body; *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the ſoul.*‡ Remark, the *body* may be killed, but the *ſoul* cannot. The reaſon is obvious, becauſe it is *ſpirit*.

If we admit that the ſoul is material, it will follow, that it may be killed; it may be pierced with a ſword. But the Son of God, who created all things, and is moſt intimately acquainted with the nature of the human ſoul, aſſures us that it is entirely different from the body, and will ſurvive its diſſolution.

The ſacred volume abounds with information concerning this intereſting ſubject; to which we ſhall frequently appeal, while we attend to the ſecond ſource of knowledge of the ſoul of man; I mean our own *conſciouſneſs of what paſſes within us*.

I aſk in the words of another, "Why may we not frame the complex idea of a ſoul, or ſpirit, from the operations of thinking, underſtanding,

* Gen. ii. 7. † Eccl. xii. 7. ‡ Matt. x. 28.

willing, &c. which are experiments in ourſelves? This idea of an immaterial ſubſtance is as clear as that we have of a material one: for though this notion of immaterial ſubſtances may be attended with difficulties, we have no more reaſon to deny or doubt of its truth, than we have to deny or doubt of the exiſtence of the body."

To you, my brethren, I now make the appeal, whether you are not conſcious of the following things:

1. That *you think*. Of this you can no more doubt than that you ſee. You know you think with greateſt eaſe. Thought is a ſpontaneous operation of the ſoul; yet you cannot ſee the thinking principle within you. And ſhould conſciouſneſs be ſuſpended by ſleep, the moment the perſon awakes, he finds all the powers of his mind ready for their wonted exerciſe.

It is alſo a matter of conſciouſneſs, that God hath given to you the important powers of reaſon, underſtanding, will and affections.

2. The nature and excellence of the ſoul may be aſcertained by this circumſtance, that it is *capapable of conſtant progreſſion in knowledge*. This we ſee continually exemplified in our children and youth. They begin their purſuit of knowledge with few ideas; but in many inſtances ſurprize as well as delight us with their progreſs; and promiſe fair to be extenſive bleſſings to ſociety. To which I add, that the greateſt men who have ever appeared in the world, began their career to literary eminence, by learning the firſt rudiments of ſcience. Even Sir Iſaac Newton was once ſeen with his ſpelling-book in his hand.

Such being the nature of the ſoul, may we not reaſonably conclude, that in a future life it will continue to increaſe in knowledge in infinite progreſſion? Freed, as it will then be, from its connexion with the body; which, by its cares, its diſeaſes, and its wants, often prevents mental improvement; it will more eaſily and rapidly advance. And, as many of the objects of knowledge are infinite, they never can be fully comprehended by a finite mind; but by their tranſcendent excellence, will keep the holy ſoul forever preſſing forward, toward a more intimate acquaintance with them. And as he advances, his happineſs will increaſe; becauſe he will have more clear and comprehenſive ideas than ever of the glory of the Divine Character; the excellency of Chriſt; the fulneſs of his redemption, and the wonders of his moral government. Theſe are ſubjects that are infinitely delightful, and can never be exhauſted.

3. The ſoul is alſo capable of *great attainments in holineſs* in the preſent life. For proof of this I refer you to the many inſtances of remarkably holy men, who have appeared in the world at different periods of time. Such were Abraham, Moſes, Elijah, with the apoſtles and firſt Chriſtians. And in modern times we ſee ſome perſons of eminent piety, who ſhine the brighter, the more they are known. They walk with God as did Enoch. If their breaſts were tranſparent, and you could read what paſſes there, you would find the moſt abſolute hatred of ſin, becauſe contrary to a holy God; the moſt ardent deſires after holineſs, as that perfection of Deity in which is comprehended all moral beauty. Hence their language is, *My ſoul*

thirſteth for God, for the living God. In them you would perceive the various Chriſtian tempers, ſuch as love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, and deep humility. They live on the very threſhold of heaven, and often anticipate the happy moment when they ſhall drop their body of ſin, as Elijah did his mantle in his aſcenſion, and enter into the reſt that remains for the people of God.

But the pious ſoul is not always thus happy in the preſent ſtate. He groans being burdened with ſin within; and ſometimes is ready to conclude, he never has known the truth as it is in Jeſus. If I am a Chriſtian, why am I thus? why ſo much ſin, ſo many wrong tempers? Permit me to ſay, that through a long life, I have had opportunities of learning from Chriſtians of different denominations, that this is their common language at certain ſeaſons. They all feel and ſpeak the ſame things. But did you complain of a body of ſin when you were in unbelief? You did not. This is the exerciſe of a ſoul renewed by grace, and brought to long for holineſs. Remember it was not Saul the Phariſee, but Paul the Chriſtian, who cried out, *O wretched man that I am: who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?*

4. The ſoul, in many inſtances, *ſuffers extreme pain in the preſent life.* We have ſeen ſome perſons in an agony of diſtreſs, on account of uncommon loſſes in buſineſs. What pain of mind do ſome perſons endure in the anticipation of a diſtreſſing event. How great their anguiſh when their Iſaac is cut down! With David they cry in bitterneſs of heart, *O Abſalom, my ſon, my ſon; would God I had died for thee, O Abſalom, my ſon, my ſon!*

What agony of ſoul do ſinners feel, when la-bouring under a guilty conſcience. *While I ſuffer thy terrors*, ſay they, *I am diſtracted. A wounded ſpirit, who can bear?* This is the caſe eſpecially with deſpairing ſinners. Such was Judas, to whom life became a burden; hence he went and hanged himſelf.

Such was the awful condition of a young gen-tleman who had forſaken the principles of Chri-tianity, and embraced the cauſe of infidelity. "When taken ill he found he had not ſhook off the expectations of another life. This made him throw himſelf upon a bed, and break out in theſe expreſſions: "Whence this war in my breaſt? What argument now to aſſiſt me againſt matter of fact? Do I aſſert that there is no hell, while I feel one in my own boſom? Am I certain there is no after-retribution when I feel a preſent judgment? Do I affirm my ſoul to be as mortal as my body, when this languiſhes, and that is vigorous as ever? O that any one could reſtore me to my ancient guard of piety and innocence: Wretch that I am! whither ſhall I fly from this breaſt? what will be-come of me?"*

Such extreme anguiſh does the ſoul endure, in ſome inſtances, in the preſent life. What then may we ſuppoſe the finally impenitent will ſuffer in the future ſtate, where hope can never come?

5. Permit me to obſerve farther as a matter of conſciouſneſs, that the *ſoul can paſs in an inſtant, in thought or idea, to the moſt diſtant parts of the globe.* The traveller can be preſent in a moment in any

* Ryland's Cauſe of Infidelity ruined forever.

country he hath ever viſited, and recollect the buildings, the inhabitants, their dreſs, their manners, &c.; yea more, by virtue of this power of the mind, the good man can aſcend to heaven in thought and affection, and unite with ſaints and angels in the delightful ſervice of praiſe and adoration. Such foretaſtes of the happineſs of heaven, ſome eminent Chriſtians are favoured with at times, that they feel a ſtrong deſire to depart and to be with Chriſt. *Why*, ſay they, *are his chariot-wheels ſo long in coming?*

6. It follows from the preceding obſervations, that the *ſoul cannot be confined by walls or bars.* You may impriſon the body, but the ſoul will enjoy its liberty: it bids defiance to its enemies, and will roam at large. Paul and Silas were confined in priſon with their feet faſt in the ſtocks, but their holy ſouls aſcended to the throne of God in praiſe and prayer. Place makes no difference with the heaven-born mind.

> "The mind is its own place;
> Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven:
> No matter where, if I be ſtill the ſame."*

7. To ſum up this part of the ſubject concerning the *nature* of the ſoul, I have only to add, that it is *immortal.* It ſhall ſurvive the body, outlive time; yea, live forever. What dignity, what unſpeakable value does immortality ſtamp on the ſoul of man! and how perfectly agreeable is it to the wiſhes of all mankind.

I cannot, on this occaſion, enter largely on the conſideration of this bleſſed truth; yet beg leave

* Milton.

to ſuggeſt, that the unequal diſtribution of things in this life, renders it neceſſary that there ſhould be a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments. We often obſerve, that wicked men proſper in the world, have all that heart can wiſh; their eyes ſtand out with fatneſs, they have no bands in their death, they are not in trouble as other men. On the other hand, we repeatedly ſee men of great piety oppreſſed with complicated ſorrows. This circumſtance perplexed the Pſalmiſt extremely; hence he ſaid, *I was envious at the fooliſh when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the ſanctuary of God; then underſtood I their end. Surely thou didſt ſet them in ſlippery places; thou caſtedſt them down into deſtruction.*

If the preſent was our final ſtate, it would be impoſſible for us to juſtify the ways of God to man. But the difficulty is removed by the doctrine of a future life, when he will render to every man according to his works. *To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for glory, honour, immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteouſneſs, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh, upon every ſoul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew firſt, and alſo of the Gentile: for there is no reſpect of perſons with God.* Rom. ii. 7—11.

But, my brethren, it is to the ſacred volume that we are indebted for the clear diſcovery of this moſt important truth. Jeſus Chriſt hath brought life and immortality to light by the goſpel. He hath taught us in places too numerous to be quoted, that we are made for immortality. *I give*

ſaid he, *to my ſheep* ETERNAL LIFE. "He that believeth in me hath EVERLASTING LIFE, and ſhall never come into condemnation." And in Matt. xxv. in which is repreſented the laſt judgment, he cloſes the ſolemn ſcene with theſe ſtriking words: "Theſe, (meaning the ungodly) ſhall go away into EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT: but the righteous into LIFE ETERNAL."

"So unmoveable is that truth delivered by the Spirit of truth, that though the light of nature gave ſome obſcure glimmering, ſome uncertain hopes of a future ſtate; yet human reaſon could attain to no clearneſs, no certainty about it, but that it was Jeſus Chriſt alone who had *brought life and immortality to light through the goſpel.*"* "I gratefully receive and rejoice in the light of Revelation, (ſays the ſame writer) which ſets me at reſt in many things; the manner whereof my poor reaſon can by no means make out to me: Omnipotency, I know, can do any thing that contains in it no contradiction; ſo that I readily believe whatever God has declared, though my reaſon find difficulties in it which it cannot maſter."

All that hath been already ſaid concerning the ſurpriſing powers of the human ſoul, tends not only to diſplay its excellence, but to prove that it is a very important object. Our bleſſed Lord aſſures us that it is worth more than the *whole world. For what is a man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul? or what ſhall he give in exchange for his ſoul?* Matt. xvi. 26.

In this light it was viewed by the firſt preachers of the goſpel; who counted not their lives dear

* LOCKE's 2d Reply to the Biſhop of Worceſter.

unto them, ſo they might finiſh their courſe with joy, and the miniſtry they had received of the Lord Jeſus, to teſtify the goſpel of the grace of God. Paul declared, that he could wiſh himſelf accurſed from Chriſt, for his brethren, his kinſmen according to the fleſh. Why all this zeal, but becauſe they conſidered the ſouls of men of great importance?

One conſideration more I mention, as full proof of the value of the ſouls of men, and that is, the *price that was paid for their redemption. For ye are not redeemed*, ſaid Peter, *with ſilver and gold, but with the precious blood of Chriſt as of a lamb without blemiſh and without ſpot.** Without the ſhedding of this blood there could be no remiſſion. Its value is infinite, therefore can never be fully deſcribed: Angels deſire to look into it. Let us, my fellow Chriſtians, dwell in contemplation on this glorious ſubject, till the happy period ſhall arrive, when we ſhall be received, through grace alone, into the preſence of God and of the Lamb; and have nothing to do through vaſt eternity, but explore and admire the wonders of redeeming love; and unite with ranſomed millions in aſcribing bleſſing and honour to him who loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his blood.

From the preceding article a very intereſting queſtion ariſeth, What is the condition of the ſoul that renders this redemption neceſſary? I anſwer. It is a condition of total depravity, guilt and condemnation.

By *total depravity*, to which objections are often made, we do not mean, that man has loſt any of the powers of the ſoul. Theſe remain amidſt the

* 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

ruins of the apoſtacy. For my own part, I believe, that mankind poſſeſs the ſame natural powers of mind, that Adam did before he fell; but that the diſpoſition of the heart is now wholly ſinful. *God ſaw that every imagination of the thoughts of the heart was evil, only evil, and that continually.**

This verſe is explicit. The depravity is in the *heart*, and is *total: every imagination* of the thoughts of *the heart* is *evil*, *only* evil, and that *continually*.

Iſaiah declares that *the whole head is ſick, and the whole heart is faint.* Jeſus Chriſt, who could not miſtake the human heart, deſcribes it as the fountain of moral evil. *For out of the heart, proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, falſe witneſs, blaſphemies.*† And Paul aſſures us that, *the carnal mind is enmity againſt God.* To which he adds, Rom. vii. 18. *For I know that in me, that is in my fleſh, dwelleth no good thing.*—That is, in him as a natural man, or in his corrupt part.

Sinners are alſo in a ſtate of guilt and condemnation, as tranſgreſſors of the law of God. For it is written, *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.*‡ This is the melancholy condition of all men naturally, becauſe all have ſinned, and have come ſhort of the glory of God.

Theſe things being true, we are called to weep over dignity in ruins. *Man being in honour did not abide.* He poſſeſſes the moſt ſurpriſing powers of mind, yet has a heart diſaffected to that God who gave him all!

From all that hath been ſaid it appears, that the converſion of ſinners is a very important and de-

* Geneſis vi. 5. † Matt. xv. 19. ‡ Gal. iii. 10.

firable object; that they may escape the wrath to come, and enjoy that happiness which the world can neither give nor take away. *Believing*, says Paul, *we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.* It is very important to families and to society at large, on account of their piety, their example and their prayers. How amiable and happy was the family of Lazarus, Martha and Mary. How happy would your families be, if you and yours were under the influence of real religion. All would be love and peace. Yet there are some heads of families, who in times of revival of religion speak evil of the things they know not, and throw stumbling blocks in the way of those under their care, who anxiously inquire what they shall do to be saved? Be not offended, if I caution you in the most solemn manner, not to discourage those persons who are anxious to become Christians; or to know what experimental religion is. If you will not enter heaven yourselves, throw no difficulties in the way of your children or domestics. Remember for all these things God will bring you into judgment. Should you not rather rejoice to see them inquiring the way to eternal life? *One thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part, that shall not be taken away from her.*

The conversion of sinners is one great object of the gospel ministry, and much to be desired, because the Redeemer's kingdom is thereby enlarged; than which nothing is more pleasing to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. It is their daily prayer, that his kingdom may come in all its glory and extent.

I add once more, that the converſion of ſinners is a very deſirable object, becauſe *God is thereby glorified.*

It is taken for granted, that Jehovah, in all his works and ways, had in view the greateſt poſſible good; and that the greateſt poſſible good is the manifeſtation of his own glory. *He hath made all things for himſelf.* The ſalvation of ſinners, except ſo far as it tends to glorify God, is a ſubordinate object in the view of all holy beings; whoſe ſupreme deſire is, that God in all things may be glorified.

This is emphatically the caſe in the plan of ſalvation, which was ſo adjuſted by the infinite God in eternity, that he will have all the glory forever.

Here mercy and truth are met together, righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other. The miniſtration of death was glorious, but the miniſtration of the Spirit is rather glorious. Every perfection of the divine nature ſhines in this way far ſuperior to every other method, in which God reveals himſelf to men. Paul therefore obſerves, that He who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our heart, to give us the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jeſus Chriſt. His *glory* or perfections ſhine in the face or perſon of Chriſt; who acted out his character, and was himſelf the brightneſs of his glory and the expreſs image of his perſon. Hence it was that he ſaid to his Father, *I have manifeſted thy name, to the men thou gaveſt me out of the world.* *Name* is uſed here as a general term for the nature or perfections of God. To diſplay theſe was the

great end Chriſt had in view, in his appearance in the fleſh.

I have no idea how certain perfections of the Deity could be diſplayed in any other way: ſuch as *mercy*, which always reſpects *miſery*; *long-ſuffering*, the *patience* of God; *forgiveneſs* or *pardon*, alſo his *juſtice*. To which may be added, that in the method of ſalvation, the love of God to man ſhines, and will forever ſhine, with the moſt diſtinguiſhed glory. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, might not periſh, but have everlaſting life.*

One of the glories of this plan of ſalvation is, that all ſinners who are ſaved by grace, experience in heart an entire moral change, and unite to give all the glory to God.

What means, it may be aſked, are beſt calculated to accompliſh this important object? I anſwer, thoſe that Chriſt hath appointed in his word. When he gave the commiſſion to his apoſtles, he commanded them *to preach the goſpel to every creature*;* becauſe *it pleaſed God by the fooliſhneſs of preaching, to ſave them that believe.*†

We have ſeveral excellent ſpecimens of apoſtolic preaching in the New Teſtament. Let us preach as the apoſtles did. Their ſentiments are divine, and the language of the holy ſcriptures inimitably excellent. It is pure and plain; with which our hearers are well acquainted, in conſequence of their conſtant peruſal of the ſacred volume.

If we, as miniſters of the goſpel, wiſh to win ſouls, we muſt exhibit the divine law in its extent and ſpirituality; for by the law is the knowledge

* Mark xvi. 15. † 1 Cor. i. 21.

of ſin. We muſt endeavour to convince the ſinner of his entire depravity and guilt, and the alarming condition he is in every moment, as a tranſgreſſor of the law of God. We muſt urge, in a plain, convincing and impreſſive manner, the abſolute neceſſity of perſonal holineſs, without which no man can ſee the Lord. We muſt enforce the neceſſity of good works as fruits of faith, and the beſt evidence to the world, that we have paſſed from death to life; and lead the people, as much as poſſible, to realize a judgment to come, and the final ſtates of men.

In a word, let us not ſhun to declare the whole counſel of God; always remembering, that Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but that God alone can give the increaſe. And for our encouragement, let us always keep in mind that excellent promiſe, *Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.**

II. It remains that we conſider, in what reſpects *he that winneth ſouls is wiſe.*

The term *wiſe* is often uſed in the ſcriptures to denote a man of real religion. In this ſenſe it muſt be taken here, as ſuggeſted before, from its connexion with the firſt ſentence, which deſcribes the *righteous*; compared with Dan. xii. 3. *And they that be wiſe ſhall ſhine as the brightneſs of the firmament: and they that turn many to righteouſneſs as the ſtars forever and ever.* That the miniſters of the goſpel ought to be good men, I believe, is univerſally allowed.

The men we deſcribe, may be ſaid to be wiſe in the choice of their profeſſion. *If any man deſireth the office of a biſhop, he deſireth a good work.*†

* Matt. xxviii. 20. † 1 Tim. iii. 1.

It is a good work, becauſe it is connected with the diſplay of divine glory, and the ſalvation of ſouls. Theſe are two of the moſt ſublime and intereſting ſubjects that can employ the minds of angels and men. He then who hath made this choice, acts from the wiſeſt and the beſt of motives; and has the moſt pleaſing proſpect of being uſeful to mankind.

With the talents and education which, in common, fall to the lot of this claſs of men, they might have made choice of a profeſſion far more lucrative; and probably have ranked with men of fortune. But from a love to God and to the ſouls of men, they chooſe rather to forego theſe proſpects and advantages.

I may alſo remark—It is a good, that is, a *pleaſant* work. To a pious, a benevolent man what can be ſo deſirable as to preach the everlaſting goſpel: which opens to the view of the mind ſuch wonderful ſubjects for holy love and contemplation; and tends to exalt and purify the heart, and to make all happy here and hereafter who believe it. With theſe views and with theſe feelings, he is willing to ſpend and to be ſpent in the ſacred ſervice; eſpecially when he ſees that the Lord crowns his miniſtry with ſucceſs.

He is wiſe in the management of the various parts of miniſterial duty. Here much might be ſaid with propriety, but I can only ſuggeſt in a few words, that he is wiſe in the choice of his ſubjects, the manner of treating them, conſidering always the ſtate of his flock; in going from his knees to the pulpit, and returning from the pulpit to his knees, to plead with God that ſucceſs may attend his feeble efforts. If wiſe, he

will addreſs the people in a plain, affectionate and perſuaſive manner; and make it evident, that he travails in birth again till Chriſt be formed in them. He will labour to inform their underſtandings, and to impreſs their hearts; and thus to ſecure their attention, and to captivate their affections to divine truth. This is the import of the original expreſſion.*

He will be eaſy of acceſs, affable and attentive to mankind at large; eſpecially to anxious ſinners, who come to converſe with him concerning their ſalvation. He will become all things to all men, that he may by all means gain ſome. He will reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-ſuffering and doctrine, and ſtudy to approve himſelf unto God a workman that needeth not to be aſhamed; rightly dividing the word of truth; giving to every one his portion of meat in due ſeaſon.

If he ſhould labour long with but little apparent ſucceſs, he will continue to be faithful in his miniſtry, and leave the iſſue with God. If ſucceſs attend his miniſtry, he will give him all the glory.

From the ſubject I take occaſion to aſk you who are parents and heads of families, whether you ever realized the importance of your ſituation? Conſider that every ſoul committed to your care is immortal. Have you diſcharged your duty to them? Or have you hitherto neglected your own ſouls and theirs? I pray you to think on theſe things before it be too late.

If the ſouls of men are of ſuch importance as hath been proved, you will not, my friends, blame the miniſters of the goſpel, for their plainneſs and zeal. If they feel right, they muſt lift up their

* Pool's Synopſis, in loc.

voice like a trumpet; cry aloud and ſpare not, though the more abundantly they love you, the leſs they be loved. Their hearts' deſire and prayer to God is, that you may be ſaved. Should you think their zeal *exceſſive*, you muſt confeſs that it is *benevolent*. Will you blame them for being too anxious for your happineſs? Aſſuredly you cannot.

But while ſome of our friends cenſure us for being zealous overmuch, we blame ourſelves that we are not more engaged to win ſouls. Brethren, pray for us, that we may be willing to ſpend and be ſpent in ſo good a cauſe.

I muſt aſk your patience a few minutes longer, while I addreſs myſelf to the candidate for ordination.

My dear young Friend,

Full three years have you been of my family; a great part of which time you have laboured with me as a ſon in the goſpel: nor were your firſt efforts unſucceſsful. There are in Boſton thoſe who were ready to periſh, who riſe up and call you bleſſed. Your continuance with us was the wiſh of my heart, and of the hearts of your friends; but the Head of the Church hath directed your way to this place by very unexpected events. We are therefore obliged to acquieſce in his diſpoſals. It is with great pleaſure we behold the union and affection that ſubſiſt between you, and the Church and Society, over whom the Lord is about to make you an overſeer. Your proſpect of uſefulneſs is pleaſing; and we, your brethren in the miniſtry, moſt ſincerely pray, that the Lord Jeſus may hold you as a ſtar in his right hand; furniſh you with every gift and grace for the ſacred office, and make you wiſe to win ſouls; and finally receive you to

his heavenly kingdom, where is fulneſs of joy, and pleaſures forever.

In fine.

Brethren of the Church and Society on whoſe account we are now together,—Give me leave to congratulate you on this auſpicious day. Your union among yourſelves, and unremitted and liberal exertions, have enabled you to take your place among the ſeveral ſocieties of Chriſtians in this town. Without going to Boſton, as uſual, to Danvers or to Beverly, to enjoy your religious privileges, they are brought to your doors. The Lord hath raiſed up for you a paſtor, we believe, after his own heart: whom we do cheerfully commend to your affection and eſteem. Let no man deſpiſe his youth. Pray for him, that he may prove a laſting bleſſing to you and to your children. Study to make him as happy as you can. The Providence that hath brought him among you is plain and ſtriking. Live in love, and the God of love and peace will be with you.

Entertain a liberal mind towards your fellow Chriſtians, who differ from you in ſome things. Wiſe and good men do not yet ſee eye to eye. While you enjoy your own privileges, leave others to the enjoyment of theirs, and fall not out by the way. This mutual candour becomes the diſciples of the ſame Divine Maſter, and is not incompatible with fidelity to your own principles and practices. May grace, mercy and peace reſt upon you and your paſtor elect; upon the church and congregation that uſually worſhip in this houſe, and their worthy paſtor, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; to whom be glory forever.

AMEN.

CHARGE

By the Rev. Dr. SMITH,* *of Haverhill.*

Men, Brethren, and Fathers,

WE are now aſſembled to attend the ordination of a worthy candidate in the miniſtry over the Baptiſt Church in this town. By the vote of the Council, giving the Charge falls to my lot.

The ſolemn tranſactions of this day juſtly claim our attention to the higheſt office in the Church of God; an office moſt honourable in its nature, but very difficult in its execution; which occaſioned the following moſt pathetic exclamation of an inſpired writer, "Who is ſufficient for theſe things!"

You, my Brother, by the Providence of God, are called to the paſtoral charge of this Church: A Church in its infancy, which claims paternal affection, tenderneſs and care. Feed them with good and wholeſome truths, which ſhall nouriſh and ſtrengthen them, that they may grow in grace, wiſdom, knowledge and underſtanding, and become unſhaken pillars in the houſe of God.

Your charge involves in it matters of eternal conſequence. The duties of your ſtation will require wiſdom, prudence, diligence, and faithfulneſs; to increaſe in which, reading, meditation, and prayer are neceſſary.

You muſt be as a ſcribe, well inſtructed in the kingdom of God, that you may bring out of your treaſury things new and old. The great doctrines

* This excellent man, whoſe praiſe is in the churches, died a few days after he delivered this Charge, of a paralytic ſhock.

of the goſpel are of infinite value; they are food to the hungry, drink to the thirſty, and joy to the diſconſolate. Inculcate charity agreeable to the ſpirit of the goſpel.

A variety of ſubjects, well digeſted, is neceſſary to render a paſtor uſeful among his flock. A ſettled miniſter, whoſe public diſcourſes are moſtly confined to the ſame people, ſhould he neglect his ſtudies, will ſoon become old and neglected. "Therefore, ſtudy to ſhew thyſelf approved unto God; a workman who needeth not to be aſhamed; rightly dividing the word of truth."

A faithful diſcharge of the goſpel miniſtry is very laborious. Intenſe application to ſtudy, viſiting the ſick, preaching the ſacred doctrines of Chriſt in their purity, and inſpecting the ſtate of the ſociety, are truly fatiguing both to body and mind.

As religion is the crown of a goſpel miniſter, it ſhould never be tarniſhed with levity of conduct, nor a ſinful conformity to the world. A uniform life of godlineſs adorns the miniſterial character, and reflects honour upon the great Head of the Church. Indeed, religion is the very life and glory of a pious ſoul.

The great doctrines of the Bible you will not fail to inſiſt upon; ſuch as the doctrine of total moral depravity, election, redemption through Chriſt, regeneration, effectual calling, adoption, juſtification through the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, ſanctification by the Spirit of God, the final perſeverance of the ſaints, the reſurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment, with future rewards and puniſhments: Alſo, the Trinity of Perſons in the Godhead;—"That there are three who bear record in heaven,

the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt; and theſe three are one."

Viſiting your charge to know the ſtate of your flock, is not one of the leaſt duties connected with your office. The watchman muſt be accountable to the Great Shepherd of Iſrael for his conduct towards his flock. Goſpel miniſters are God's ſpiritual watchmen, whoſe duty it is to feed the flock of God; to ſound an alarm in time of danger "to ſtrengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees; to ſay to them that are of a fearful heart, be ſtrong, fear not;" to reclaim backſliders; to diſcountenance errors, and lead in the way of righteouſneſs.

The moral law in its full extent, with all its penalties, muſt be faithfully publiſhed.

You muſt endure hardneſs as a good ſoldier of Jeſus Chriſt: and never, at the expenſe of truth, endeavour to pleaſe men.

As your ſucceſs in the miniſtry will depend wholly upon the divine bleſſing, let your deſires continually aſcend to God, for direction in the choice of your ſubjects. But after all your preparations for the public, depend ſolely upon the Lord for aſſiſtance. "Let your eye be ſingle, that your whole body may be full of light." Shun not to declare the whole counſel of God.

Give full proof of your miniſtry: In all things ſhewing thyſelf a pattern of good works: In doctrine ſhewing uncorruptneſs, gravity, ſincerity, ſound ſpeech which cannot be condemned, that he who is of a contrary part may be aſhamed, having no evil thing to ſay of you.

"Lay hands ſuddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's ſins; keep thyſelf pure." Let the holy ſcriptures of the old and new teſtament be the man of your counſel; in them may be found every neceſſary truth to preach and practiſe. Adminiſter the ordinances of the new teſtament agreeably to the inſtitution of Chriſt, and the practice of the Apoſtles.

And now, Brother, "I charge thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, preach the word; be inſtant in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-ſuffering and doctrine; for the time will come when they will not endure ſound doctrine."

At the cloſe of your miniſtry may you join St. Paul in ſaying, "I have fought a good fight; I have finiſhed my courſe; I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord the righteous Judge ſhall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them alſo who love his appearing."

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, inviſible, the only wiſe God, be honour and glory forever and ever. *Amen.*

RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP

By the Rev. ELISHA WILLIAMS, *of Beverly.*

IT is written and left upon ſacred record, to the everlaſting honour of a number of the people of God of old; who, after a long and tedious captivity, and the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, the city of their ſolemnities, and place which the Lord had choſen to record his name there; that having a deſire and deſign in their hearts to repair the ſame, that they might attend upon the orders and ordinances of their God, they ſaid one to another, Come, let us riſe up and build: So they ſtrengthened their hands for this good work. And although they were oppoſed, deſpiſed, and laughed to ſcorn, as being a feeble band, and told by thoſe who had no portion nor memorial in Jeruſalem, that if even a fox ſhould go up upon the wall which they built, it would break it down; yet they truſted in the God of Heaven, ſaying, He will proſper us; ſo we his ſervants will riſe and build.

This is worthy of imitation, and matter for encouragement to all whoſe hearts are truly engaged in building up the cauſe of the kingdom of God. And the miniſters of the goſpel, who are ſtyled builders, may ſhare in the encouragement, at leaſt in common with other Chriſtians, and be thereby animated to their work. For as it ever has been, ſo it may ever be expected, that much oppoſition

will be made to the good work they are engaged in; they ſhould therefore truſt in the God of Heaven, and do what in them lies to ſtrengthen one another. This we promiſe, in a dependence upon divine grace, whenever we aſſiſt in introducing any one into the ſacred miniſtry; agreeably to the example of the apoſtles, James, Cephas and John, who gave unto Paul and Barnabas the Right Hand of Fellowſhip.

The cuſtom in common life of giving a friend the right hand, is expreſſive of common friendſhip. The cuſtom among the Churches of Chriſt, of miniſters giving each other the right hand on public ſolemnities like the preſent, is a viſible teſtimony of the communion of the Churches; it indicates that miniſters are united under our common Lord; it ſhews that they are ſtrongly bound to ſupport, encourage, and animate one another, by prayer and mutual aſſiſtance, in the difficult and glorious work into which they have entered; and teſtifies their ſincere affection for them, and their readineſs to all offices of friendſhip and love.

It hath pleaſed the glorious King and Head of his Church to incline the hearts of a number to riſe up and build a Church in this place, as we apprehend, according to the order of the goſpel; and whom we have this day publickly acknowledged as a Church of Chriſt. They having been diſpoſed, in union with the Society connected with them, unanimouſly to invite this our beloved Brother to take the paſtoral charge of them, the Council convened at their requeſt, have manifeſted their approbation of, and ſatisfaction in, the choice they have made of this their Paſtor, who has now been,

by prayer and impoſition of hands, ſolemnly ſet apart to the work of the miniſtry, and ordained to the paſtoral care of this particular Church and Society.

And now, agreeably to the ancient token of union and fellowſhip, which is left upon record for our learning and imitation, and I truſt with ſome degree of that godly ſincerity which poſſeſſed their minds, I do, by the appointment of the Council here convened, and in their name and behalf, give unto you this *Right Hand*. Receive it, dear Brother, as a teſtimony of our moſt cordial union with you in the bonds of a precious Redeemer; of our fellowſhip and concurrence with you in the work to which you are devoted and ſolemnly ſet apart: alſo, as a public acknowledgment of our readineſs to afford you our beſt advice and aſſiſtance in your labours in the miniſtry; and that we will be as ready to receive as to impart thoſe labours.

And now, dear Sir, ariſe, build; and the Lord be with you. May you enjoy the comforts of the goſpel you preach; and after a long and ſucceſsful miniſtry, receive the reward of a good and faithful ſervant from Him who holdeth the ſtars in his right hand.